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SERMON

PREACHED

IN LAMBETH-CHAPEL,

AT THE

CONSECRATION

OF THE

Right Reverend FATHER in GOD

JAMES *Johnson*

LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER,

On Sunday, Dec. 10. 1752.

By WILLIAM MARKHAM, D.C.L.
Student of *Christ-Church, Oxford.*

Published by Order of His Grace the Lord
Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury.*

OXFORD,

Printed at the THEATRE for JAMES FLETCHER in the
Turl. and Sold by J. and J. RIVINGTON in *St. Paul's*
Church-Yard, *London.* MDCCLIII.

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2 TIM. I. 7.

*God hath not given us the spirit of fear;
but of power, and of love, and of a
sound mind.*

THE Epistles of St. Paul, among other marks of difference, have one which is very obvious. Those which were written to the Churches, being intended to oppose erroneous opinions, contain generally a labour'd deduction of arguments: while those which are directed to particular persons, who were firm in the faith, but might yet be strengthen'd by occasional instructions, consist chiefly of preceptive admonitions. Of these it is observable, that although contain'd in a few words, they are wonderfully copious in substance and meaning. And I doubt much, if there is any among them, which has a better claim to our attention, than this before us. The words are address'd to Timothy, who was newly call'd to the Episcopal station: they encourage him

to a zealous perseverance in the duties of his function; and prescribe the means, by which that zeal might be *fruitful unto holiness*. They seem indeed to comprehend the whole that is requisite to the forming a fit minister of God's word. At least I shall so understand them. Yet though I depart a little from the received interpretation, I mean not to offer a better; but only to prefer that sense, which seems most applicable to the present state of Christianity.

The text then, as supposed to contain the entire complement of ministerial endowments, will be understood to give us this lesson: as fear is incompatible with the discharge of our trust, so on the other side there are necessary to it, the improvement of our faculties, charity, and discretion. *God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

For as Christianity is not a mere speculation, but is founded in practice and habit, these words refer us to action; and recommend to us the abilities for it, the incentives to it, and that governing quality, to which it must owe its regularity and success.

By *power* then I would have signified the weight and consideration, which is procured by improved talents; by *love*, the beneficent disposition, which gives to those talents life and energy;

gy; and instead of noxious or indifferent, makes them useful and amiable: by a *sound mind*, moderation and prudence; without whose alliance, the union of the others would be ineffectual.

When these have been treated of in their course, it will be considered of what kind that *fear* is, which is ranked in opposition to them; as obstructing their operations. As to the word *spirit*, it is, in the Eastern use of it, so frequently applied to all the good and all the evil qualities in man, that it needs not to be insisted on.

In following then this distribution of our subject, there will appear not only the propriety of such qualifications in the Clerical character, but also their own mutual dependence and connexion; so that no one of them can be perfect in itself, when deserted by the others. For how shall knowledge be rated, if we take away from it the views to publick utility, and the guidance of discretion? Or what shall we call charity without abilities, or prudence? Or how shall we suppose prudence to subsist in a mind uninstructed and unprincipled? Or what good effects can be hoped from all of them combined, if they are to be awed and laid asleep by every apprehension of danger? But by taking a separate view of each, we shall understand more clearly their uses and relations.

It

It has been said before, that by *power* is meant abilities for action, and these arising from the improvement of our talents. This improvement will appear to be a duty, from the very frame of our nature. Man is left destitute of many conveniences, with which brutes are furnished; that the want of them might engage him in the cultivation of his faculties: and most men indeed conform to this duty, so far as their mere necessities require. They aim at perfection in the track of their employment; they even advance farther, for the sake of loitering amusement, or the little ambition of figuring in company. And if we consider the drudgery of most professions, this mediocrity will be very pardonable: even on this stock they may be useful citizens. But will a minister of the Gospel offer this excuse? or what avocations can he plead, to make it appear tolerable? Leisure and opportunities can never be supposed wanting; and in proportion to these will the account be, which is exacted of him.

The Prophets and Apostles indeed had the knowledge of God by inspiration. Though we may suppose, that on them too those graces were, in some measure, conferred in reward of their natural endeavours. To us are left the faithful records of the Scripture; the understanding of which can only be attained by labour and study.

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A variety of languages and sciences are to be retained in that service: and the most intense application will not seem too much, to those who consider what they profess; the conducting the children of men to life eternal; and for this end, the being prepared to reclaim the dissolute, to satisfy the scruples of weak brethren, and to give an answer to the gainsayer. In which last view it would be difficult to find times, that demanded such abilities, more than those we live in.

It is to be wished indeed, that all the offices of the ministry could be filled with persons so qualified. But it is in speculation only, that perfection is to be sought; all that practice will admit of, is to come as near it as we can: and a little acquaintance with mankind will convince us, that the Church must be contented with such a degree of it, as the condition of the world allows. Where the harvest is great, some labourers must be admitted, whose sufficiency might in some sort be questioned. But the access to the higher stations should be guarded with more vigilance. An illiterate Bishop, in a country so eminent for learning, would be one of the *strange evils under the sun*.

As no excuse can be admitted for such an affront to Religion and decency, so we hope, none will ever be wanted. It must be said indeed for the

the honour of our Communion, that no Church can shew a succession of Pastors, who have labour'd more earnestly in the duties of their function, the advancement of science, and every good work.

In the Clerical character then, the advantages of knowledge are so evident, and the invitations to it so alluring, that it is marvellous they are ever withstood. We owe our thanks to Providence, that this has been made our business, in which men, to whom harder occupations are fallen, seek their most agreeable refuge: that we are by this distinguished from the croud, who are wasting the capacities which God has given them, in fordid or vicious employments. We should be conscious, that if the dignity of pursuits is to be measured by their objects, this must have the preeminence of all. The immediate object of this is the happiness of man: to which others indeed contribute; but they only furnish the materials, to which this gives proportion and form. This pursuit never fails to repay our industry, both by the pleasure which follows every step, and the esteem it procures from all around us. It is the great preservative of Virtue; as it engages us in business, which lies out of the road of temptations: it will restrain that indecent eagerness in soliciting preferments; and on the
other

other side prevent our ever mixing with the factious. For in men of such a cast, it is observable, that whatever merit they trust to, it is very opposite to virtue and learning. We may say indeed without dreading the imputation of ill nature, that the life of a Clergyman passing on from year to year without any literary enquiries can scarcely be innocent. We live in times likewise, in which learning is so common, that although it must be always comely and reputable, yet in the Clergy the having it is not so meritorious, as the want of it is reproachful. In them it is thought indispensably necessary; from their whole education being that way directed, from the professions which they daily make, and the tenure by which they enjoy all their emoluments. It is a heavy accusation: *Ye have taken away the keys of knowledge, and entered not yourselves, and those that would have entered ye hindered.* For when learning is notoriously wanted, their order and their doctrine must fall into contempt; the word of truth be evil spoken of, and their flocks exposed to every seducer.

But for the authority which knowledge gives one fact may be sufficient. We have seen the most obnoxious of the Popish orders, with nothing plausible in their favour but their reputation for learning, and in spite of constant oppositions,

maintain their conspiracy against the rights of mankind. Much therefore may be expected from applying to laudable designs the same influence, which could give success to the most odious and execrable. The fault is rather, that men are disposed to think too favourably of knowledge in every kind; as well what is merely curious and perhaps of evil tendency, as of that which is actuated by benevolence. When we reflect then on the numbers of men in all ages, who with the noblest and most improved talents seem to have been born to be the plagues of society, we shall judge the accession of Charity to be very expedient.

To Charity therefore we are next directed. The word in the text is *love*: which, though it might be referr'd to God, I confine to the love of our neighbour; because this is in Scripture said to be expressive of the other, and because it comes more immediately under human observation. As this then is the leading ingredient in our notion of a Christian, and cannot be separated from it, without defacing the whole, it will appear to be more necessary in the Clergy, than learned attainments: inasmuch as the being a Christian should be prior to the being a preacher of Christianity. Besides that learning without this is a most dangerous instrument of mischief.

But

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But Charity unassisted, though not equal to any great purposes, may yet be useful; and will as to intentions be always innocent.

For understanding the uses of this virtue no more is necessary, than to consider what are its opposites. They will appear to be the malevolent affections of every kind; all that tend to violence, injustice, and disorder: and from the slightest view of them it will be allow'd, that without the commerce of good offices the duration of any society must be very short. It is therefore provided by the wisdom of our Creator, that those, who have not this end in view, should still act towards it by the instinct of their natures; but the misfortune is, that being compounded of various affections, the generality of men will be carried, as they happen to be driven, sometimes under the influence of the good and generous, and sometimes of the vicious and hurtful: the sensual too and selfish, which are constantly active, being chiefly on the side of the latter, they must generally prevail, unless a sense of duty be opposed to them, and be kept likewise equally vigilant, and active.

The virtue therefore doth not consist in obeying the sudden impulses of our humane affections; which are occasionally exerted in the most depraved natures; but in a regulated and uniform

course of beneficence. This is what our Saviour enforces so much oftner than the other duties; as most tending to the good of man, and most comprehensive of any. For the virtues, which seem farthest removed from it, have a foundation in Charity. We are told also, it should be unbounded in its aim and action; not confined to persons, parties, or nations, but imitating, as far as it is able, the goodness of God, which is so liberally diffused throughout his works.

From this universality of it an objection has been raised to the internal evidence of Christianity; in which it is wonderful its most confident adversaries should think they found an assailable part: but it has been objected, that it was deficient in not recommending the love of our country, and private friendship. As if the principle of beneficence was meant to be used indiscriminately; and had not been given to moral agents, who have rational faculties to direct its application, and distribute it in the proportions, which our several relations demand. Reason too is here seconded by the bent of our affections; which naturally attach themselves to those things, with which they are most conversant. The endearments of society are powerful enough to produce these effects: which properly indeed flow from the passions. Such attachments will be always

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ways prevalent in well-natured dispositions; so that it is difficult to avoid partialities even to things inanimate. The danger is rather of self-love's continually narrowing the circles of duty, than of their being too much enlarged. We might mention also the time of the Gospel's promulgation; when the power of the earth was engrossed by two great empires: so that if laws and constitution are considered as the objects of love, the nations had little left, that they could call Country; and in the Jewish converts the exclusive principle was already too strong to need encouragement. If national interests and causes had been set up, the heathen powers would have had more colourable excuses for persecution, than they ever found. But this argument must not now be pursued. It is enough to say, that Charity operates, as well in the domestick, as the most extended connections, and strengthens the exertion of every social and manly principle.

There is moreover scarce any virtue so conspicuous as this, or so capable of being ascertained. We have not such frequent opportunities of exercising the others, or giving a proof of their reality: but for this occasions are constantly offering; and in determining the existence of the virtue almost every act is decisive. As this then is more observed than others, its nature too is better

better understood. Men therefore use it as a criterion of the rest: and a very fair conclusion they make; that, where this is defective, there can subsist but very scanty portions of any other.

Hence it is, that the influence of it, especially in persons of higher stations, is very remarkable. It always begets and cherishes the like disposition in those about them. For as it shows itself by single acts, which may be called the objects of sense, it strikes forcibly on minds, which would have been little affected by the best arguments: their good affections are stirred in them; and they are led to the same course, which their understandings would have pointed out, had they been open to instruction.

I do not know how this can be better instanced, than by recalling to your memory those two most excellent Prelates, who are now with God, and whose loss to the Church is meant to be repaired by this day's solemnity. The mention of whom will suggest to us the many laudable undertakings, which found patronage and support in their examples, and the general good testimony which is given to their virtues, even by those, who are known to be very sparing in their commendations of Churchmen. This I would attribute to that candour and benevolence, which distinguished every action of their lives. If those
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had been less conspicuous, their learning, piety, and other eminent qualities might have past unnoticed, or uncommended. It was Charity, which threw the light on their other virtues, and brought into view their whole characters in the true colours and proportions.

We can hardly suppose indeed that any minister of the Gospel is void of this virtue; but certain it is, that the reputation of it will be very useful to him: it disposes men's minds to a more patient hearing, and gives every admonition and reproof an easier introduction: for nothing works so powerfully towards persuasion, as a belief, that the speaker is in earnest, and means kindly: but where the intention is suspected, whatever is said, will be called pride, ill humour, or at best the customary cant of the profession.

There are likewise very considerable motives to the practice of this virtue in the pleasure which attends it. And we ought to adore the goodness of God, who hath so framed our natures, as to leave in every man's possession such a source of satisfaction: for the pleasure, which follows an act of beneficence, is as real, as what arises from our own advantages; and certainly is more lasting. We cannot suppose, in the most flowing course of prosperity, such a succession of good to ourselves, as will afford constant satisfactions.

tions. The condition of human affairs doth not allow it; nor are our own natures equal to it: after a little use we are cloyed and surfeited. But of the pleasures which result from Charity, as the fund is inexhaustible, so the greatest abundance can never produce any disrelish.

The benevolent man has also this advantage; that the mere endeavour to do good will always ensure the gratification: besides, that his temper of mind, unless obstructed by something quite constitutional, is necessarily accompanied with cheerfulness and tranquillity. Such a state is the perfection of human felicity. In what service therefore can Charity be more worthily employed, than in giving the same disposition to our fellow creatures: by bringing them to a relish of those pure enjoyments, which are found only in the innocency of life, and the service of our Creator; by convincing them, that although they are so unwearied in the pursuit of pleasures, they are constantly defeating their own aims; and are purchasing, at the dearest rate, remorse and diseases, bitterness and anguish. Who is there, that has not observed in those men a lamentable dejection of spirits; such as out of that class is scarcely to be found?

But that these endeavours may be attended with success, another qualification is requisite; that of a sound mind.

By

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By a *sound mind* I understand Moderation or Prudence: which, though not exactly the same; are yet so nearly related, that those, who profess treating of them as distinct, seem frequently to have confounded them, from the likeness of their features. Neither of them indeed can subsist without the other. Prudence is said to preside over and direct the other virtues; Moderation, to contain them: as being the opposite to excess, by which vice is constituted. Moderation consists too in having the appetites in due subjection; to which subjection they are brought by Prudence. I may therefore, without any great inaccuracy, use them as signifying the same thing; the discreet ordering of our words and actions.

It is evident, that this virtue must be necessary in all stations; and particularly in those, which are so conspicuous, as to expose every action to examination and censure. It might be applied also to doctrines: since from a partial attachment to favourite points, an undue weight has been given to some religious duties; to an observance of ceremonies, to an inactive faith, to a mental converse with God, and an indolent contemplation of his essence; and some others: in each of which the whole of Religion has at times been made to consist. But these enquiries

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ries would lead us too far from the view proposed.

It being endless then to consider all the cases, to which this virtue might be applied, it shall be treated only as relative to a misguided zeal, and the infirmities of temper. From hence arose the distractions of the Church in the early ages of Christianity: and it is to be wished, that from these only our examples could be taken. But there have been times not so far removed from our own, in which violence against all who dissented was considered as the testimony of a Christian zeal: by which the best-intentioned men were led to produce greater mischiefs, than could have been effected by the worst inclinations, with a more regulated temper. It may be said for them indeed, that the times were angry and violent; and the very consciousness of their own integrity made them more impatient under the crosses and provocations, which they met with. Offence has been given also, by a notion which was sometimes favoured, that Ecclesiastic as well as civil societies were upheld by the opinion of their temporal power; and should therefore aim at the possession of that, which in truth ought only to be borrowed. For that surely is not their natural support; however plausibly it may be contended for, from the view of things in their
depraved

depraved state. This has at various times given rise to suspicions, and consequently to averfions. And though the charge was never founded on any thing more than flight appearances, yet even these were blameable: and it is to be expected, nay hoped indeed, that our countrymen will always shew their usual spirit, in resenting them. Had the first approaches towards power and riches been checked in the Church of Rome, they never could have reduced Religion to a mere Political system. But this caution is not now necessary: it must at these times seem very strange even to suppose a case, that required it. The attack has long been changed; and it is well, if the laborious minister can defend his legal stipend from daily depredations.

We may likewise receive from this virtue some lessons for the method of instructing and reproofing. The subject indeed is too nice to admit of precise rules: but so much may be said; that, as the end proposed is conviction, every thing which hinders that, should be avoided. The direction in the Levitical law is this: *thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* The command of rebuking follows that of not hating. We might add too; *thou shalt not appear to hate thy brother.* What must

those, to whom we profess meaning well, think of sourness, anger, and animosities? They will never be persuaded, that love can associate with such unsuitable companions.

As such then are the consequences of ill-governed passions, it must appear, that some experience of the world, some knowledge of mankind, is particularly requisite in those, to whom the government of the Church is committed. The affairs of the world are inseparably mixed with our religious concerns. There is, besides a system of doctrines, an external discipline, a society to be supported; a civil character, and an interest in the publick welfare. And a reproach, which an error of judgement in their civil capacity might produce, will be easily transferred to their spiritual.

This consideration takes much from the weight of a common objection; that many men of most eminent piety and learning are suffered to remain in the lower stations of the ministry. For besides that this in the course of things is unavoidable, they may not always be the best qualified for active employments; they may not be (in the words of the Apostle) *those who by reason of use have their senses exercised, to discern both good and evil.*

If we apply this virtue to the conduct of common life, it will be obvious, that servility and arrogance, parcimony and ostentatious expence, are equally departures from it. The same is true of levity and moroseness, rashness and negligence, a weak facility of temper, and a stubborn severity. But we cannot enter into these details. It is enough to say; that Moderation only can give us that propriety of character, in which the beauty and comeliness of a religious life consists: that it is this chiefly, which in the eyes of men *makes the garment of holiness honourable*. We cannot therefore be too much guarded against the minutest indiscretions; as we must know, by how little things popular estimation is governed: we must know, that, for the sake of jest and raillery only, reports to our disadvantage are favourably heard; and that the imperfections of a single Clergyman are not thought to be compensated by the purity of many.

We have now taken a view of these three qualifications; *Abilities, Charity, and Discretion*: to which if we add Courage, nothing more can be requisite for the filling any station with sufficiency. And it will appear on a little reflexion, that these are the cardinal virtues, so much insisted on by moral writers.

Nothing

Nothing remains, but to consider what the Apostle has put in opposition to these; *the spirit of fear.*

The properties of *fear* are, not only to make us avoid action, but, where it is excessive, to disqualify us for it; by disabling our faculties. And it necessarily betrays us into mean compliances, and every kind of baseness. With regard to its consequences therefore it is properly ranked among the vices. Hence it is, that the love of life, the most natural and justifiable of all our principles, may in some circumstances be criminal.

But this account of Fear would be better suited to those times, in which the being a preacher of the Gospel meant the same, as the being prepared for tortures and death. We have not now any such trials, though, if it should please God to call us to them, we trust, there would not be wanting among us, in the most perilous seasons, many *witnesses of a good confession.*

But if *we* are possessed with fear, it must be of another kind; a fear of offending Patrons, a fear of losing the lucrative stations. I do not say, honourable stations; as not supposing so delicate a sense, as that of honour, can remain under such a depravity. In a Clergyman at least it cannot be consistent with a revolt from duty and

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conscience. The love of fame is very allowable; as a cordial to support us through our wearisome pilgrimage: and though we ought to have nobler motives, this indulgence may be given to the weakness of our nature. But those men can have no such feelings; or they would not sacrifice reputation also to any dignity, that station can give. If power is ever so attained, we must expect the exercise of it will be conformable to the acquisition. Of such it is said; that *their glory is in their shame*. I confine the offence therefore to the love of riches, either for the sake of themselves, or of the sensual gratifications, which they afford.

Timidity then, being an unreasonable apprehension of pain and danger, (which are avoided, as destructive to our nature,) has this excuse; that although it ought to be overruled by a sense of duty, the passion still is certainly involuntary: it is therefore less culpable than intemperance; which is an inordinate pursuit of pleasure, and proceeds from the will. But the cowardice, of which we are speaking, with all the meanness of the one, has the guilt likewise of the other. It hath no plea in its favour. It is a wilfull desertion of the station, in which *the Captain of our Salvation* hath placed us. And as it is base and unbecoming in itself, so it well agrees with
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its cause, the desire of riches ; by which appetite, of all others, the narrow and illiberal mind is most denoted.

We are told by Solomon ; *the fear of man is a snare*. We are cautioned likewise against *the deceitfulness of sin ; lest we be hardened by it*. The application of these words will appear very pertinent, if we consider, that although there may be no determined purpose of bartering away our duties, yet the love of riches being once encouraged, no one knows, how far his affections and judgment may be swayed by it. And as no passion is so insinuating, none so surely destroys the liberty of action ; which, of mere earthly acquisitions, is the only one worth a wise man's attention.

It must be allowed at the same time, that the Gospel-minister has many and great discouragements. But it is equally true, that they all arise from the state of Religion among us. When the altar of God is insulted, the Priests must expect to be sharers in its fortune. What are called discouragements therefore, should in truth be considered as so many incentives to duty. There was never, I believe, in any age, a more avowed profligacy, in principles and practice ; never a more abominable prostitution in both sexes, not only of the Christian character, but of every
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thing that is decent and respectable. And was it only a matter of mere human policy, it behoves all ranks of men to concur in the suppression of so alarming a wickedness. We may wonder truly, that this is not more attended to, in an age which is so fond of speculations, on subjects that are far less interesting. But the case is; men's private vices find a freer course, from the countenance and consent of the multitude.

There is one maxim, in which the greatest masters of Political science are all agreed; that the ordinary commotions in states will do little harm, where the morals of the people are not corrupted; and where they are, that the best-devised laws will do no service. It has been likewise agreed; that men can never be brought to the knowledge of justice, unless first brought to the knowledge of God: and that as far as the influence of Religion is destroyed in a government, so much is taken from its perfection; and, of course, from its permanency.

But in our more intelligent times, the received maxims seem to be; that however men's passions may be broke loose from the restraints of conscience, the publick has nothing to fear: that government is not affected by morals, or morals by opinions. What these dangerous symptoms will end in, God only knows: but it behoves

us, who are the *watchmen of Israel*, to deliver *our own Souls*; that if the wicked man dies in his iniquity, his blood be not required at our hands. The most righteous among us must confess, that without so heavy an addition, our offences are more than we can bear.

There are not wanting however some considerations, which may strengthen us in the discharge of our ministry. We are assured of the Royal protection and assistance. In the higher stations of the Church are many persons of most distinguished learning and virtue. The jealousies of the Clergy's power are now at an end. The violence of our Sectaries is much abated: and we have not anywhere to encounter much zeal for contrary opinions. The complaint is rather of a general dissipation, and a careless enjoyment of the good things of this world. It may be hoped therefore, that with these encouragements, the good work will be carried on, which, though we wanted such, would still be our duty.

I mean not to be a reprovcr, or an adviser. The assuming such a character in this assembly would ill become so mean a servant of Christ's household. But to the inferior part of my audience I may confidently recommend St. Paul's account of ministerial endowments; that they may measure by it the fitness of their spiritual
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leaders, and justify the wisdom of our gracious Sovereign.

It remains only, that we offer up our prayers, that what is done this day may be for the glory of God, and the welfare of this Church and nation; and *that grace and peace may be multiplied among us, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus, our Lord.*

To whom with the Holy Ghost be ascribed, as is most due, all honour, praise, majesty, and dominion, now and ever.

F I N I S.

Prayer for the Church of England

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